On the discovery of a secret technique employed by Shakespeare and Marlowe for creative writing purposes

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A Morten St. George Investigation

This essay presents evidence of an important discovery with regard to the writings of the English playwrights William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe. It may turn out be the most important discovery with regard to these playwrights so far made in the 21st century.

What we discovered is a major source of inspiration for both, never before noted for either, namely, a book in French containing the infamous prophecies of Nostradamus. The influence of those prophecies is widespread across all the plays of both playwrights and also applies to most of their poems.

The nature of this influence was two-fold, both technical and thematic. On the technical side (effectively a tool to stimulate the imagination), three or four words would be extracted from a prophecy having roughly twenty-five words, translated into English, randomly scattered on paper, and then written around to produce two or three lines of dialogue. An effort to find similar correlations between Nostradamus and other playwrights of the epoch has led to nothing. In other words, the correlations are unlikely to be coincidental.

On the thematic side, it is demonstrated that the content of the prophecies was utilized to write plots for several plays, such as Marlowe's Tamburlaine and Shakespeare's Macbeth. Dramatic concepts such as insanity, suicide and cross-dressing are all shown to have derived inspiration from the prophecies.

We consider the prophetic interpretations of Nostradamus experts but only to arrange our illustrations in normal chronological order, beginning with the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, then on to the assassination of the Kennedy brothers, the assassination of Martin Luther King, the lunar landing, the Watergate scandal, and so forth. Wars in the Middle East and another in the South Atlantic are not overlooked. Prophecies concerning all of the major historical events of the second half of the 20th century were utilized by Shakespeare and Marlowe in writing their plays.

In the London Themes section, we review the intriguing words of Shakespeare and Marlowe in regard to the three famous prophecies of the 17th century, namely, the beheading of Charles I in 1649, the Great Fire of London in 1666, and the Glorious Revolution of 1689. For an illustration in the Theatrical Themes section, we show how the Nostradamus prediction of the assassination of Napoleon via arsenic in the wine influenced the plot of Hamlet.

In recent days we have been heavily criticized for inquiring if anyone thought these prophecies were manifesting genuine foresight of the future. Let's clarify something: we follow the chronology of Nostradamus only for entertainment purposes or for ease of presentation and for no other reason. The main objective of this essay is to acquire academic recognition for our sensational discovery of the Nostradamus influence on Shakespeare and Marlowe.

Finally, note that this essay takes no stand on the Shakespeare Authorship Question but the issue will be briefly discussed elsewhere. For now, it can be assumed that Marlowe was first to utilize Nostradamus for creative writing purposes and that he then taught those techniques to Shakespeare when they shared authorship of the play Edward the Third.

In the 16th century, people sometimes used the letter "y" for an "i" while the letter "i" could stand for a "j" and the letter "u" for a "v" or vice versa. French and English matching terms are highlighted in bold.

PROPHETIC THEMES

Nostradamus:
L'**oiseau** royal sur la cité solaire,
Sept moys deuant fera **nocturne augure**:
Mur d'Orient, **cherra** tonnerre esclaire,
Sept iours aux portes les ennemis **à l'heure** [1, V-81].

The royal bird over the city of the Sun, Seven months beforehand shall make nocturnal augury, The wall of the Orient shall fall, thunder illuminated, Seven days to the ports the enemies to the hour [168 hours?]. Note that Nostradamus decided to use and frenchify the Latin word "portis" (dative case), which can mean either *gates* or *seaports*. Elsewhere we will find "port," *seaport*, in unambiguous context.

Shakespeare:
Ham. Not a whit, we defy **augury**; there's a special providence in the **fall** of a **sparrow** [2, Ham.].

Shakespeare:
And with my hand at mid**night** held your head;
And, like the watchful minutes **to the hour** [2, Jn.].

Theophilus de Garencières, who made the first English translation of the Nostradamus prophecies in 1672, tells us "By the Royal Bird is meant an Eagle" [3], but Shakespeare considers other possibilities, here the sparrow. However, it is the word *fall* that seals the correlations, adding one last

component to take us beyond the realm of coincidence and validate Nostradamus as the source.

Note that Nostradamus uses *fall* in the sense of the fall of an empire and Shakespeare uses it to refer to the descent of a bird, but nevertheless the terms equate for the purpose at hand.

Nostradamus:
Des **sept rameaux** à trois seront reduicts,
Les plus aisnez seront **surprins par mort** [1, VI-11].

Of the seven branches to three (they) shall be reduced, The oldest [plural, implying the two oldest of the three] shall be surprised by death.

Shakespeare:
Or **seven** fair **branches** springing from one root.
Some of those seven are **dried by nature's course**,
Some of those **branches** by the Destinies **cut** [2, R2].

Dried by nature's course alludes to aging branches (the oldest) and cut branches are branches that are quickly killed (surprised by death). We will now repeat the second line and join it with the last two lines.

Nostradamus:
Les plus aisnez seront **surprins** par mort,
Fratricider les **deux** seront seduicts,
Les coniurez **en dormans** seront morts [1, VI-11].

The eldest [more than one] shall be surprised by death, To kill the two brothers (they) shall be seduced, The conspirators [conjures] in sleeping shall die. And so we see that the three of the first line were brothers and, presumably, the remaining four (to bring the total up to seven) were their sisters.

Shakespeare:
And may ye **both** be suddenly **surpris'd**
By bloody hands, **in sleeping** on your beds! [2, 1H6].

In Nostradamus, the conspirators die of natural causes, i.e. are never caught for their crime, but Shakespeare would prefer another outcome; he also wishes he could help: "To rescue my two brothers from their death" [2, Tit.].

The saga continues:

Nostradamus:
Du **toict** cherra sur le grand mal **ruyne** [1, VI-37].

From the roof evil ruin shall befall the great one.

Shakespeare:
Seeking that beauteous **roof** to **ruinate** [2, Son.].

Shakespeare draws two correlations from the lines that follow this ruination:

Nostradamus:
Innocent faict **mort** on **accusera**:
Nocent caiché taillis à la bruyne [1, VI-37].

Innocent in fact [or of the deed] when dead he shall be accused, The guilty one hidden: "taillis" to the "bruyne" where we note that "bruyne" [1, VI-37] [4, VI-37] stands in sharp contrast to "bruine" [1, V-35] [4, V-35] as seen below: there must be a "y" in the name of the guilty one!

Shakespeare:
KING. Wherefore hast thou **accus'd** him all this while?
DIANA. Because he's **guilty**, and he is **not guilty** [2, AWW].

Shakespeare:
To **slay** the **innocent**? What is my offence?
Where is the evidence that doth **accuse** me? [2, R3].

The location changes:

Nostradamus:
Lon passera à **Memphis** somen**tree** [1, X-79].

One shall pass to [or pass away in?] Memphis somentree. The meaning of *somentree* is unknown; perhaps it was intended to allude to a place where we find Memphis? Garencières writes "This word *Somentrees*, being altogether barbarous, is the reason that neither sense nor construction can be made of all these words" [3]. Let's look at what Marlowe has to say about this:

Marlowe:
Memphis, and Pharos that sweet date-**trees** yields [5, Ovi.].

Evidently, Marlowe too is unable to figure out what *somentree* (or *somentrees* per Garencières) means, but at least he notices that it ends in a recognizable English word: trees! Indeed, the hyphenated spelling *date-trees*, as opposed to *date trees*, could be taken as a signal that *trees* is the ending of a word. These *trees* are preceded by *so*, which by itself or as an abbreviation for *south* or *southern* is also an English word, and so too with *men* after that, another English word. Did Marlowe think they spoke English in Memphis?

Shakespeare gives us "Than Rhodope's of **Memphis** ever was" [2, 1H6]. Rhodope is the name of a tree-infested mountain in Bulgaria, so perhaps *Somentrees* really is a place with lots of trees!

This is the next verse of that prophecy:

Nostradamus:
Le grand **Mercure** d'**Hercules fleur de lys** [1, X-79].

The great Mercury of Hercules fleur-de-lys. Mercury was the god of commerce, and Hercules represents force, giving the verse the following sense: the great armaments trade shall flourish.

Shakespeare:
His foot **Mercurial**, his Martial thigh,
The brawns of **Hercules**; but his Jovial face- [2, Cym.].

Marlowe's assessment of that verse is far more profound:

Marlowe:
Besides, there goes a Prophesy abroad,
Published by one that was a Friar once,
Whose Oracles have many times proved true;
And now he says, the time will shortly come,
When as a Lyon, roused in the west,
Shall carry hence the **fluerdeluce** of France [6].

We find an allusion to the Pillars of Hercules in the penultimate line (*as a lion roused in the west*). It combines with the *fluer* in the last line to give us a correlation. This citation is from *Edward the Third*, a play that was published anonymously and whose authorship was hotly debated among scholars for centuries. Today, Shakespeare is believed to have written parts of it, and Marlowe the passage that we cite [6].

The cited passage was spoken in France, so *abroad* in the first line implies that the "Prophesy" (irregular spelling of *Prophecy*, a book of oracles) is of British origin. In the third line, the phrase "Whose Oracles" is apparently intended to refer to the *Prophecy* and not to the 12th-century Friar

(Geoffrey of Monmouth) who published it. Perhaps such confusions explain why neither Shakespeare nor Marlowe wanted to stick their name on the front cover of that play?

Nostradamus now takes us to a faraway place:

Nostradamus:
Dedans le **coing** de Luna viendra rendre,
Ou sera prins & mis en **terre estrange**,
Les **fruicts** immeurs seront à grand **esclandre** [1, IX-65].

Into a corner of the Moon he shall come to render, Where he shall be taken and placed on strange terrain, The immature fruits shall be, by great scandal,

Garencières exclaims: "But what he meaneth by the Corner of Luna, I must leave the judgement of it to the Reader, for I ingeniously confess that I neither know City nor Country of that name" [3]. Shakespeare, for his part, knows that Luna is the Moon and he leaves no doubt about it: "A title to Phoebe, to Luna, to the moon" [2, LLL]. In Greek mythology, *Phoebe* became a synonym for Artemis, the Greek moon goddess. Marlowe makes a complex correlation out of it:

Marlowe:
And search all **corners** of the new-found **world**
For pleasant **fruits** and princely delicates;
I'll have them read me **strange** philosophy [5, Fau.].

On the immature fruits, Shakespeare writes "Then it will be the **earliest fruit** i' th' country; for you'll be rotten ere you be **half ripe**" [2, AYL]. Shakespeare also takes a look at the third line combined with the last line:

Nostradamus:
Les fruicts immeurs seront à grand **esclandre**,
Grand vitupere **à l'vn** grande **louange** [1, IX-65].

The immature fruits shall be, by great scandal, Great vituperation, to the one, great praise.

Shakespeare:
Oft have I heard **his praises** in pursuit,
But ne'er till now his **scandal** of retire [2, 3H6].

In Nostradamus, the praise (*louange*) is *in pursuit* in the sense that it follows the scandal (*esclandre*) of the preceding line, but as events the great scandal comes after the new-found Moon!

Around the same time, the surviving brother (as we saw, his two older brothers were killed) runs into some trouble of his own:

Nostradamus:
Par **detracteur calumnié** à **puis nay** [1, VI-95].

The youngest brother slandered by a detractor. The "puis nay" is the *after born* of male siblings.

Shakespeare:
To do in **slander**. And to behold his sway,
I will, as 'twere a **brother** of your order [2, MM].

Shakespeare links the French verb "calumnié" with the English noun "slander," and next he reuses this correlation, changing "slander" from a noun back into a verb:

Shakespeare:
your **brother** incensed me to **slander** the Lady Hero [2, Ado].

Marlowe employs a word not found in Shakespeare: "An eare, to heare what my **detractors** say" [5, MP].

In the next prophecy, Nostradamus reveals himself to be a devout Catholic:

Nostradamus:
Apres le **siege** tenu dix- sept ans,
Cinq changeront en tel reuolu terme:
Puis sera l'vn **esleu** de mesme **temps**,
Qui des Romains ne sera trop **conforme** [4, V-92].

After the (Holy) See held for seventeen years, Five shall change in such revolved term [a revolving of the numbers ten, seven, five, one?], Then the one shall be elected of same time, Who of the Romans shall not be very conformable.
Variant: dixsept [1]. By *of same time*, it is implied that the non-Italian Pope of the last line is the last of the five Popes who follow the Pope that reigned for seventeen years.

Marlowe:
That doth assume the **Papal government**
Without **election** and a true consent [5, Fau.].

Marlowe:
POPE. Welcome, Lord **Cardinals**; come, sit down.--
Lord Raymond, take your **seat** [5, Fau.].

Popes are *elected* to the Chair (*seat, "siege" in French*) of Saint Peter by Cardinals.

Shakespeare:
At all **times** to your will **conformable** [2, H8].

After the election of the new Pope, the action moves from Italy to the Middle East:

Nostradamus:
Le Roy de **Perse** par ceux d'**Egypte** prins [1, III-77].

The King of Persia by those of Egypt taken. Persia is the old name of Iran.

Marlowe:
SECOND MERCHANT ...
Of **Persian** silks, of gold, and orient pearl.
BARABAS. How chance you came not with those other ships
That sail'd by **Egypt**? [5, JM].

Marlowe fails to perceive that *taken* was used in the sense of being *accepted* or *taken in* (given refuge) rather than in the sense of being *carried* or *captured*, which doubtless explains why he ends with a question mark. Nostradamus now takes us from Iran to neighboring Afghanistan:

Nostradamus:
Aries doute son **pole** Bastarnan [1, III-57].

Aries doubts its Bastarnan pole.

Marlowe:
MEPHIST. All jointly move from east to west in twenty-four hours upon the **poles** of the world; but differ in their motion upon the **poles** of the **zodiac** [5, Fau.].

The French *Arie* was the old name of Afghanistan but Marlowe sees the Aryans as something in the zodiac! The Bastarnae were a people who occupied Poland and the Ukraine during Roman times. Note that, contrary to legend, Marlowe originates the great Tamburlaine in Scythia (an ancient land covering the Ukraine and parts of Russia).

Later, perhaps just a few years later, the newly-elected Pope has transformed himself into a great Pontiff:

Nostradamus:
De la partie de Mammer grand Pontife,
Subiuguera les confins du **Danube**:
Chasser la Croix par fer raffé ne riffe,
Captifs, or bague plus de **cent mille** rubes [4, VI-49].

From the part (or party) of Mammer, great Pontiff, (It) will subjugate the frontiers of the Danube, To chase the Cross by iron, by hook or by crook, Captivated: gold, bag more than one hundred thousand red things. Variants: les croix, bagues [1].

The *partie* can refer to a region or to a political party while the *fer* can represent any type of weapon made of iron. The *raffé ne riffe* is an Italian expression, suggesting that Italy is the scene of action. Nonetheless, Marlowe associates this attack on the great Pontiff (represented by *the Cross* in the third line) with the country of Bulgaria since he ends a line with Bulgaria immediately below a line ending with the Danube:

Marlowe:
Betwixt the city Zula and **Danubius**;
How through the midst of Varna and Bulgaria [5, 2Tam].

Zula, a bay at the southern end of the Red Sea, makes no sense in the given context. More likely than not, Marlowe wishes to allude to the famed *city* of Zara (see below) on the Adriatic Sea, on the opposite end of the Balkans and which fits the context perfectly.

Since the Danube is a river, the mysterious *Mammer* of the first line may also be a river. Allowing for manipulation to minimize chances of offending someone, it could be the Memel (elsewhere Nostradamus gives us "Mammel" [1] and Shakespeare the unique name "Mamillius" [2, WT]), a major river of Eastern Europe.

At the end of the Nostradamus citation, the *rubes* is an adjective employed as a noun (red things), but Garencières sees them as rubles: "A Ruble was a coin of gold of the great *Mogul*, worth one or two pound sterling" [3].

Marlowe:
A **hundred thousand** crowns [5, JM].

Shakespeare:
The payment of a **hundred thousand** crowns; [2, LLL].

Shakespeare views the hundred thousand as a payment [to the Bulgarians?] for services rendered [to hunt down the great Pontiff?]. Marlowe and Shakespeare each employ the hundred thousand in relation to a currency (the crowns), so perhaps Garencières was not far off in concluding that the *rubes* refer to rubles.

The attack on the Pope is again mentioned:

Nostradamus:
Prelat royal son **baissant** trop tiré,
…
Le regne **Anglicque** par regne respiré [1, X-56].

Royal prelate his baissant all shot up [with bullets?], … The Anglican reign by reign breathes anew.

This prophecy indicates that the attack on the Pope will occur around the time of an English royal wedding. The meaning of *baissant* is unknown. Shakespeare likewise is unable to figure out what *baissant* means:

Shakespeare:
I cannot tell vat is **baiser** en **Anglish** [2, H5].

It is, however, somewhat mysterious where the Project Gutenberg found these words because the First Folio reads a bit different: "I cannot tell wat is buisse en Anglish," which is preceded by the words "baisee" and "baisant." Immediately above *buisse* we find "Interpreter" which quickly leads us to the true meaning of *baissant*: "Interpretez seront les extipices" [1], from where we conclude *Royal prelate his extispicy (intestines) all shot up*. Was Shakespeare afraid of offending the Papacy?

This brings us to the last line of that prophecy:

Nostradamus:
Long temps **mort vif** en Tunis comme **souche** [1, X-56].

Long time dead alive in Tunis like a stump. The expression *dead alive like a stump* could refer to someone who became a human vegetable. Shakespeare asserts: "**Not** he which says the **dead** is **not alive**" [2, 2H4]. And elsewhere: "And so in spite of **death** thou dost survive, In that thy likeness still is left **alive**" [2, Ven.]. Marlowe and Shakespeare were both impacted by the stump:

Marlowe:
Cut is the **branch** that might have grown full straight [5, Fau.].

Shakespeare:
And though we leave it with a **root**, thus **hack'd** [2, H8].

The meaning of *Tunis* is unknown because Nostradamus clearly uses the spelling *Tunes* for the city of Tunis in another prophecy and in unmistakable context. *Tunis*, therefore, is likely to be an acronym, contraction, or abbreviation of the name of some country. Regardless, the event of the human vegetable apparently occurs around the time of the attack on the

Pope which, as we just saw, occurs around the time of an English royal wedding

It was noted that Nostradamus writes *Tunis* as "Tunes" and we will now look at that:

Nostradamus:
Ceulx de **Tunes**, de **Fez**, & de **Bugie**:
Par les Arabes captif le **Roy Maroq** [1, VI-54].

Those of Tunis, of Fez, & of Bougie, By the Arabs the King of Morocco enticed.

Marlowe and Shakespeare both refer to **Tunis** [5, 2Tam] [2, Tmp.] and to Bougie (**Argier** [5, 1Tam] [2, Tmp.]). For the king, Marlowe goes directly with the **King of Morocco** [5, 1Tam] while Shakespeare gives us the **Prince of Morocco** [2, MV], but only Marlowe mentions Fez:

Marlowe:
I here present thee with the **crown** of **Fez** [5, 2Tam].

The *crown* more or less equates with *king* to give us a correlation. Fez is a city in Morocco, so perhaps that is where the King of Morocco is captivated by the Arab cause. Besides North Africa, Arabs also live in the Middle East, and therein this passage may connect with another Nostradamus prophecy:

Nostradamus:
Cassich **sainct George** à demy perfondrez:
Paix assoupie, la **guerre** esueillera,
Dans **temple** à **Pasques** abysmes enfondrez [1, IX-31].

Encircled, Saint George to one half, demolished, Peace soporific, the war shall be awoken, Within the temple on Easter-day, abysses opened up. The war appears to be in full swing in the first line, but in the next line it is just

beginning, so the Easter *abyss* likely precedes, and perhaps inspires, the war.

Shakespeare:
Saint George, that swing'd the dragon [2, Jn.].

By legend, Saint George killed the dragon near the city of Beirut, where today we find Saint George Bay. Twice more Shakespeare correlates on these lines:

Shakespeare:
Throng our large **temples** with the shows of **peace**, And not our streets with **war**! [2, Cor.].

Shakespeare:
And in the **temple** of great Jupiter Our **peace** we'll ratify; seal it with **feasts** [2, Cym.].

Here, both correlations make use of *temple* and *peace*. To make it a three-word correlation, Shakespeare, in the first instance, goes with *war*, and in the second instance he views Easter as a feast. Note that he says *seal it with feasts*, that is, *seal the correlations* with the third equivalent term.

Attention now turns to a war out at sea:

Nostradamus:
... sur le pont l'**entreprise**,
Luy, satalites la **mort** degousteront [1, IV-89].

... *upon the sea the enterprise, For it, satellites shall disgust the death.* The first meaning given by Latdict for the Latin verb "degusto" is *to glance at*. Note the apocope of the Latin "pontus" for *sea*: "pont Euxine" [1], "Euxine Sea" [5, Luc.], "Pontic Sea" [2, Oth.].

Marlowe:
And smite with **death** thy hated **enterprise** [5, Fau.].

Though Marlowe and Shakespeare consistently make heavy use of the words of Nostradamus, for reasons unknown they both ignore the satellites. Garencières, without comment, simply repeats and italicizes the French word in his English translation.

The *enterprise upon the sea* suggests action taken by a fleet:

Nostradamus:
Angloise classe viendra soubs la bruine,
Vn rameau prendre, du grand **ouuerte guerre** [1, V-35].

English fleet shall come under the drizzle, To take a branch [of the British Empire?], from the great one [Great Britain?]: open war. In the first line of this prophecy we find "mer," *sea*, thereby making a fleet out of *classe* (a frenchifying of the Latin word *classis* which could mean either army or fleet).

The *bruine* comes from the Latin *bruma* or *pruina* both of which referred to wintry weather. Note that the *du grand* is of masculine gender and hence cannot apply to the *guerre* which is a feminine noun.

Shakespeare:
I shall be, if I **claim** by **open war** [2, 3H6].

This is the only instance of the expression *open war* in Shakespeare. Presumably, with a reference to the sea inferable here (English fleet), the aforementioned satellites played a role in the unleashing of that open war.

Meanwhile, the "English fleet" itself is nowhere at all to be found in the official works of Shakespeare and Marlowe but we do find it fighting sulfur battles in *Edward the Third*, in a scene attributed to Marlowe [6].

We now return to the Middle East:

Nostradamus:
De **rouges** & **blancs** conduira grand trouppe,
Et iront contre le **Roy** de **Babylon** [1, X-86].

Of reds and whites (it) shall conduct great troop, And (they) shall go against the King of Babylon. Babylon is the old name of Iraq, and the reds and whites may refer to the flags of a great military force.

Marlowe:
Shall mount the milk-**white** way, and meet him there.
To **Babylon**, my **lord**s, to **Babylon**! [5, 2Tam].

Shakespeare:
Am I not of her **blood**? Tilly-vally,
lady. [Sings]
There dwelt a **man** in **Babylon** [2, TN].

While Marlowe correlates with the color *white*, Shakespeare alludes to *red*, the color of blood.

Let's do one more:

Nostradamus:
Du **ciel** viendra vn grand Roy d'**effrayeur**,
Resusciter le grand Roy d'**Angolmois** [1, X-72].

From the sky shall come a great king of terror, To resuscitate the great king of Angolmois.

Marlowe:
But, lady, this fair face and **heavenly** hue

Must grace his bed that **conquers Asia**,
And means to be a **terror** to the world [5, 1Tam].

With *conquers Asia*, Marlowe apparently views *Angolmois* as an anagram of the French *Mongolois*, the Mongols, who were led by Genghis Khan to conquer Afghanistan and much of Asia.

THE LONDON THEMES

It seems that our playwrights, particularly Marlowe, were utterly fascinated by the city of London (the place where they lived and worked), so we will here dedicate a few words to that city, starting with what appears to be a surprising event.

Nostradamus:
Senat de **Londres** mettront à **mort** leur **roy** [1, IX-*49*].

Senate of London shall put their king to death.

Marlowe and Shakespeare take the same approach and stretch the correlations across four lines:

Marlowe:
By yelping hounds pull'd down, shall semm to **die**:
Such things as these best please his **majesty**.--
Here comes my lord the **king**, and the nobles,
From the **parliament**. I'll stand aside [5, E2].

Shakespeare:
Have wrought the easy-melting **King** like wax.
He swore consent **to your succession**,
His oath enrolled in the **parliament**;
And now to **London** all the crew are gone [2, 3H6].

To your succession implies the *death* of a king and seals the correlations. But London's troubles are far from over.

Nostradamus:
Le sang du iuste à **Londres** fera faulte,
Bruslez par **fouldres** de **vingt trois** les six:
La **dame** antique cherra de **place haute** [1, II-51].

The blood of the just in London shall make fault, Burnt by lightnings of twenty, three the six, The antique dame [an old bitch?] shall fall from high place.

Marlowe:
This **cursed town** will I consume with **fire**,
Because this **place** bereft me of my love;
The houses, **burnt**, will look as if they mourn'd;
And here will I set up **her stature** [5, 2Tam].

For Marlowe, London is a cursed town because it is destined to burn to the ground for fault (or lack) of just people, and this bereaves him. In Nostradamus, the old dame falls from her high place and Marlowe may be thinking that the prophecy refers to his beloved queen, so in the ashes of the fire he wishes to renew her stature (position of power) or perhaps erect a statue in her honor.

Shakespeare:
The **fires** i' th' **lowest hell** fold in the people!
Call me their traitor! Thou injurious **tribune**!
Within thine eyes sat **twenty** thousand deaths, [2, Cor.].

The fires fall from the high place to the lowest hell while the tribune gives us a *three*, preceded by the *twenty* which we pick up in the next line.

Recovery from the fire does not lead to lasting peace and quiet as troubles once again strike London.

Nostradamus:
Trente de Londres secret **coniureront**,
Contre leur **Roy** ... [1, IV-89].

Thirty of London in secret shall conspire, Against their King ... The "coniureront" comes from the Latin "conjuro": to conspire, to form a conspiracy.

Marlowe:
May enter in, and once againe **conspire**
Against the life of me poore Carthage **Queene** [5, Did.].

This is a three-word correlation: *conspire* at the end of the first line, *against* at the beginning of the second line, and *queen* replaces *king*.

Shakespeare:
And now to **London** all the crew are gone
To frustrate both **his** oath and what beside
May make **against** the house of Lancaster.
Their power, I think, is **thirty** thousand strong [2, 3H6].

With *his*, a possessive adjective, substituting for *their*, it becomes a four-word correlation. Here's the last line of that prophecy:

Nostradamus:
Vn **Roy esleu** blonde, natif de Frize [1, IV-*89*].

A King elected blonde, native of Frisia. Frisia is the old name of Holland.

Marlowe envisions a conspiracy that results in the removal of the first king:

Marlowe:
Y. Mor. Curse him, if he refuse; and then may we
Depose him, and **elect** another **king**.

But the French verse is grammatically confusing: A King (masculine) elected blonde (female), native (male) of Holland. Since Nostradamus routinely employs Latin syntax, we must assume that the *blonde* is in the ablative case where one can express causal agency *without* the use of a preposition. Thus, we must understand: A Dutchman elected King [of England] by reason of a woman [his wife?]. Marlowe, however, fails to recognize the Latin syntax and becomes appalled by the thought that a future king of England will be a transvestite!

Marlowe:
But seek to make a **new-elected king**;
Which fills my mind with strange despairing thoughts,
Which thoughts are martyred with endless torments;
And in this torment comfort find I none [5, E2].

Nonetheless, Marlowe's whole line of thinking is curious because, in his day, English kings were normally chosen by hereditary factors or by the wishes of a reigning monarch, and not in open elections.

Shakespeare, likewise, fails to recognize the Latin syntax but is not appalled. Instead, he succumbs to reality and creates instances of cross-dressing in his plays!

MISCELLANEOUS THEMES

We will begin this section with a look at something different: natural disasters instead of the usual human-made disasters.

Nostradamus:
Corinthe, **Ephese** aux **deux** mers **nagera** [1, II-52].

Corinth, Ephesus, to the two seas (it) shall swim. Note the use of the singular "nagera" instead of the plural "nageront": the Latin language would use a singular verb for two or more grammatical subjects only when those subjects were synonyms. The first line of this prophecy says "Dans plusieurs nuits la terre tremblera," *During many nights the ground shall tremble*," which makes us think *the two seas* are the waves of two earthquakes. Corinth, once called Ephyra, might be in trouble.

Shakespeare:
Two ships from far making amain to us-
Of **Corinth** that, of Epidaurus this.
...
And, **coasting** homeward, came to **Ephesus** [2, Err.].

War follows:

Nostradamus:
Guerre s'esmeut par deux **vaillans** de luite [1, II-52].

War moved by two valiant in combat.

Marlowe:
And bloody **wars** so many **valiant** knights [5, E2].

Shakespeare:
Why, let the **war** receive't in **valiant** gore [2, Tim.].

But elsewhere we find a clarification: "Deux grands rochers long temps feront la guerre [1]," *Two great rocks [geological faults?] for long time shall make the war*, to which Shakespeare would add "The raging rocks / And shivering shocks [2, MND]." Poor Corinth!

Let's now move away from shivering Greece and look for better places.

Nostradamus:
Ceulx d'**Orient** par la vertu **lunaire** [1, I-49].

Those of the Orient [East] by the lunar virtue.

Shakespeare:
It is the **East**, and Juliet is the sun!
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious **moon** [2, Rom.].

The phrase *by the lunar virtue* can also allude to *lunacy* and *lunatic*. King Lear and Lady Macbeth are two among several Shakespearean characters endowed with madness.

Nostradamus:
D'vn gris & noir de la Compagne **yssu**,
Qui onc ne feut **si maling** [1, X-91].

Of one gray and black out of the Campaign issued [born], That never was there one so evil. Things again turn ugly. This could be a military campaign whose name begins with the letter "C" given that it is capitalized in the French text.

Shakespeare:
This act, **so evilly borne**, shall cool the hearts [2, Jn.].

Shakespeare combines the last two words of the bottom line with the last word of the preceding line to get the correlation.

And now a few words for England:

Nostradamus:
Plus Macelin que Roy en **Angleterre**,
...
Lasche **sans foy**, sans loy **saignera terre** [4, VIII-76].

More Macelin than king in England, … Loose, without faith, without law, the ground shall bleed. Variant: macelin [1].

Shakespeare:
Much work for tears in many an **English** mother,
Whose sons lie scattered on the **bleeding ground** [2, Jn.].

But Marlowe transfers the "without faith" from England to Asia:

Marlowe:
What cruel slaughter of our Christian **bloods**
These **heathenish** Turks and **pagans** lately made [5, 2Tam].

One can only wonder if Marlowe's pagan characters, forced upon him by the prophecies, could be what gave rise to personal accusations of atheism against him?

Here's an example where one of the parallel terms is purely conceptual.

Nostradamus:
Le **Pánta chiona philòn mis** fort **arriere** [1, IV-32].

The Panta Chiona Philon left far behind. Shakespeare appears to have no idea what the Greek words refer to, so he classifies them as *signs and tokens*.

Shakespeare:
BIONDELLO. Faith, nothing; but has **left** me here **behind** to expound the meaning or moral of his **signs and tokens** [2, Shr.].

Greek words make another appearance:

Nostradamus:
Kappa, **Thita**, **Lambda** mors bannis esgarés [1, I-81].

Kappa, Thita, Lambda bite banished astray.

Likewise, the *signs and tokens* make another appearance:

Shakespeare:
DEMETRIUS. See how with **signs and tokens** she can **scrowl** [2, Tit.].

Shakespeare's *scrowl* is a deliberate misspelling of the verb *scrawl*, which means *to write in a hurried and careless manner*. How do we know that Shakespeare misspelled it on purpose? That's easy. Just look at the French verse: Nostradamus misspells Theta!

Note the *bannis* in that last verse. It's a word that Nostradamus reemploys elsewhere:

Nostradamus:
Chassez, **bannis** & liures censurez [1, VIII-71].

Chased, banished, and books censured.

Without sealing a correlation, Shakespeare responds:

Shakespeare:
To mangle me with that word '**banished**'? [2, Rom.].

Mangled? Seriously? Nostradamus only used it twice! "Why, this fellow hath **banish'd two** on's daughters" [2, Lr.], and, lo and behold, banishment mangles diverse sections of the Shakespearean canon. Marlowe too seems to have been mangled with *banish* as he employs it frequently.

Nostradamus:
La terre & l'**air geleront** si grand **eau**,
Lors qu'on **viendra** pour **Ieudy** venerer [4, X-71].

The land and the air shall freeze so much water, When one shall come to venerate on Thursday. Variant: ieudy [1], today spelled *jeudi*, Thursday.

Marlowe:
It was as blue as the most **freezing skies**;
Near the **sea**'s hue, for thence her **goddess came** [5, HL].

Here we find five parallel terms in just two lines: *air* equates with *skies*; *geleront* (will freeze) equates with *freezing*; *eau* (water) equates with *sea*; *viendra* (will come) equates with *came*; and *Ieudy* (the god of Thursday veneration) equates with *goddess*.

Shakespeare:
she makes a **show'r of rain** as well as **Jove** [2, Ant.].

A *shower of rain* equates with *water* and the French *jeudi* derives its name from the Latin "Jovis dies," the day of Jupiter.

Nostradamus:
Feu grand **deluge** plus par **ignares sceptres**,
Que de long **siecle** no se verra refaict [1, I-62].

Fire, great deluge more by ignorant scepters, That, of long age, shall not be seen remade. The phrase *of long age* effectively refers to the end of time.

Marlowe:
Time ends, and to old Chaos all things turn,
Confused stars shall meet, celestial **fire**
Fleet on the **floods**, the earth shoulder the sea [5, Luc.].

Here, Marlowe is making a translation of the Roman poet Lucan, so surely it cannot contain a correlation with Nostradamus, right? Wrong. *Antiquum repetens iterum chaos, omnia mixtis, Sidera sideribus concurrent ignea pontum, Astra petent, tellus extendere littora nolet.* Much of it is there including the *fire*, but where do you see the deluge (floods)? In his own

mind Marlowe could be linking the English fleet of V-35 with the activity upon sea of IV-89 granted that Lucan uses the word "pontum" for the sea.

Shakespeare also has something to say about this:

Shakespeare:
Give me a staff of honour for mine **age**,
But not a **sceptre** to control the world [2, Tit.].

Like Nostradamus, Shakespeare views the scepter as an instrument that yields enormous powers.

Shakespeare:
When went there by an **age** since the great **flood** [2, JC].

Nostradamus:
Le penultiesme du surnom du **prophete**,
Prendra Diane pour son iour & repos [1, II-28].

The penultimate of the surname of the prophet, Shall take a Monday for his day and rest. Diana was the Roman Moon goddess.

Marlowe:
We are the Muses' **prophets**, none of thine.
What, if thy mother **take Diana's** bow [5, Ovi.].

Once again Marlowe seems more interested in his Nostradamus correlations than in accurate translation. *Pieridum vates, non tua turba sumus. quid, si praeripiat flavae Venus arma Minervae*. The Muses were the inspiration of poets, not of prophets, and Minerva's weapon (a spear as in Shake-spear) is transformed into Diana's bow.

Shakespeare:
PORTIA. If I live to be as old as **Sibylla**,
I will die as chaste as **Diana** [2, MV].

Sibylla is the Latin name of the first Sibyl at Delphi, who by legend was of great antiquity. The Greek and Roman Sibyls were women famed for their *prophetic* powers, essentially making Sibylla a synonym of prophetess and thereby, with Diana, establishing a correlation.

Nostradamus:
Bien eslongnez el **tago** fara **muestra** [1, X-25].

A long way away, el tago shall make a display. Note that Nostradamus writes this line in Spanish, pointing to a faraway place where that language is spoken [the Andes?], and the derogatory *El Tago* suggests someone infamous born in or near Toledo, famed city on the banks of the Tagus River.

Marlowe:
To verse let kings give place and kingly **shows**,
And banks o'er which gold-bearing **Tagus** flows [5, Ovi.].

Ovid's original reads: *cedant carminibus reges regumque triumphi, cedat et auriferi ripa benigna Tagi!* The Tagus is there but the rest is modified to give us the *shows* (in the sense of more than one display). It is most curious that Marlowe chose to translate sections of the works of Ovid and Lucan that contained some of the rarer words found in Nostradamus (here the river *Tagus*).

Shakespeare:
Before the **tag** return? whose **rage** doth rend
Like interrupted **waters**, and **o**'erbear [2, Cor.].

Shakespeare thinks raging waters allude to a river, whereupon his readers will instinctively know to take the isolated *o* and tag it on to the word *tag* in order to get *tago*. Ha.

Here's one about an unwanted war:

Nostradamus:
Quand istront **faicts** enormes & **martiaux**:
La **moindre** part **dubieuse** à l'**aisnay** [1, VI-95].

When there shall emerge enormous and martial deeds: The least part doubtful to the eldest brother. The French "enormes" can also mean *atrocious* and the "aisnay" would be the *first born* of male siblings. He would have to be the eldest of the three brothers mentioned earlier, and perhaps his opposition to this war was what led to his death?

Marlowe's correlation is simplistic:

Marlowe:
To some direction in your **martial deeds** [5, 1Tam].

Shakespeare also correlates on this:

Shakespeare:
Speak, Salisbury; at **least**, if thou canst speak.
How far'st thou, mirror of all **martial** men? [2, 1H6].

Note that "least" is now employed as a noun and not as an adjective but it nonetheless gives us a correlation.

And Shakespeare again:

Shakespeare:
Reg. But have you never found my **brother**'s way
To the forfended place?

Edm. That thought abuses you.
Reg. I am **doubtful** that you have been conjunct [2, Lr.].

This correlation seems doubtful but the *conjunct* at the end is suggestive of looking for words on opposite ends of intermediary lines.

And now we turn our attention to an unidentified country, well frozen, and described by an allusion to the name of the dynasty of its rulers:

Nostradamus:
Terroir Romain qu'**interpretoit** augure,
Par gent Gauloise sera par trop **vexee**:
Mais nation Celtique **craindra** l'heure,
Boreas, **classe** trop loin l'auoir poussee [1, II-99].

Territory Romain that interprets the augury, By Gallic people [the French] shall be very much vexed: More, the Celtic nation [Germany] shall fear the hour, Boreas [the North Wind], army too far the having pushed. The word *classe*, which can mean either *army* or *fleet*, is here an army because of *terroir* in the first line.

Marlowe:
Beats Thracian **Boreas**, or when trees bow own
And rustling swing up as the **wind** fets breath.
When Cæsar saw his **army** prone to war [5, Luc.].

Marlowe moves Boreas from line 389 in Lucan to line 391 in his translation to bring it closer to Caesar's army and seal the correlation.

Shakespeare considers this prophecy to be *beyond self-explication*, that is, pretty much impossible to comprehend:

Shakespeare:
Would be **interpreted** a thing **perplex'd**

Beyond self-explication. Put thyself
Into a haviour of less **fear**, ere wildness [2, Cym.].

THEATRICAL THEMES

Beyond the use of Nostradamus to stimulate the imagination, there are signs of a wider influence. Here we will look at one example from Marlowe followed by three examples from Shakespeare.

TAMBURLAINE THE GREAT

Nostradamus:
Le plus grand voile hors du port de Zara,
Pres de Bisance fera son entreprinse:
D'ennemy perte & l'amy ne sera,
Le tiers à deux fera grand pille & prinse [1, VIII-83].

The greatest sail out of the port of Zara, Near Byzantium it shall make its enterprise, Of enemy, loss, and the friend shall not be, The third to two shall make great pillage and seizure.

This appears to be one of several prophecies that may have inspired Marlowe to write about Tamburlaine and his conquests. It was an ambitious project for Marlowe: he tries to incorporate all the places mentioned by Nostradamus from Scythia to Persia and then over to Morocco. However, it seems that the real Tamerlane (d. 1405) concentrated his conquests in Asia, so Nostradamus alone may have inspired the North African conquests found in Marlowe's play.

Byzantium, an earlier name of Constantinople, brings the Turks into the picture. Marlowe: "And think to rouse us from our dreadful **siege**, Of the famous Grecian **Constantinople**" [5, 1Tam]. Note that Marlowe specifies

Grecian Constantinople: it was the Greeks who colonized Constantinople and named it *Byzantium*.

Unlike the historical Tamerlane, who had noble origins, Marlowe gives his Tamburlaine humble beginnings: a shepherd, who rises up to attain a great empire through military conquests:

Nostradamus:
Lieu obscur nay par force aura l'empire [1, VIII-76].

Born in obscure place, by force he shall have the empire.

CORIOLANUS

Nostradamus:
Le grand Senat discernera la pompe,
A l'vn qu'apres sera vaincu chassé,
Ses adherans seront à son de trompe
Biens publiez, ennemis deschassez [1, X-76].

The great Senate shall discern the pomp, Of the one who afterwards shall be vanquished, chased out, His adherents shall be, by sound of trickery, Public goods, inimical things forced out. Note the apocope of *tromperie* to rhyme with *pompe* as affirmed elsewhere: *La cité prinse par tromperie & fraude, … Luy & tous morts pour auoir bien trompé* [1].

Twists of fate and reversals of destiny permeate the plays of Shakespeare, and here we see a plausible inspiration for the concept. The story of Coriolanus coincides well with the first two lines, but the prophecy does not specify that this is a Roman senate and not some other senate. Indeed, the "l'vn" being chased out here may be the same "l'vn" we saw earlier receiving *lunar* praise prior to the *great scandal*.

On the correlation with "To whom he more **adheres**. If it will please you / To show us so much gentry and **good** will" [2, Ham.], note that *adherents* (a noun) equates with *adheres* (a verb) and that *goods* (a noun) equates with *good* (an adjective). No one can question that Shakespeare was a master of the parts of speech!

HAMLET

Nostradamus:
Le croisé frere par amour effrenee
Fera par Praytus Bellerophon mourir,
Classe à mil ans la femme forcenee
Beu le breuuage, tous deux apres perir [1, VIII-13].

The crossed brother by unbridled love, Shall make, by Proetus, Bellerophon to die, Army (or fleet) to a thousand years, the woman enraged, Drink the beverage, all two [both] afterwards to perish.

Bellerophon was the name of a great hero in Greek mythology; in later times, it became the name of a renowned ship of the royal navy. The meaning of *to a thousand years* is unknown. Nostradamus numbered this prophecy VIII-13 (813).

In the third line, the woman, the sister of the high-ranking ecclesiastic (Cardinals wore a cross) of the first line, becomes enraged by the military defeat of one of the two who are poisoned in the last line. Thus, the ecclesiastic, out of love for his sister and like Proetus in the myth, arranges for someone to kill the defeated hero.

Citation from Wikipedia on Bellerophon:

"Proetus dared not satisfy his anger by killing a guest, so he sent Bellerophon to King Iobates his father-in-law ... bearing a sealed message in a folded tablet: Pray remove the bearer from this world."

Citation from Wikipedia on *Hamlet*:

"Claudius, fearing for his life, sends Hamlet along with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to England with a note to the King ordering Hamlet to be executed immediately."

Let's continue with Wikipedia on *Hamlet*:

"Gertrude drinks poisoned wine intended for Hamlet and dies. ... In his own last moments, an enraged Hamlet ... manages to stab and wound Claudius ... and finishes him off by forcing him to drink his own poisoned wine. Horatio attempts to commit suicide by drinking the poison ... "

Oops! This cannot be. The prophecy says that **two** shall perish and two are already dead from drinking the poison.

" ... but Hamlet swipes the cup from his hands and orders him to live to tell the tale."

That's better.

Claudius was Hamlet's uncle, and assuming that Shakespeare interpreted the prophecy correctly, the killer of the poisoned hero would have to be his uncle, that is, the enraged woman was his mother.

Shakespeare seems to be unsure if "Drink the beverage, both afterwards to perish" refers to murder or suicide (but the second line of this prophecy clearly implies murder), either by poison or by other means. In *Romeo and Juliet*, both protagonists commit suicide after drinking something but only one of the drinks was poison. Shakespeare also assumes that both deaths

are simultaneous or near simultaneous, but the prophecy says no such thing.

Antony and Cleopatra gives us yet another example of a double suicide *by unbridled love*.

Nostradamus:
Le sel, & **vin** luy seront à l'**enuers**, [4, IX-49].

The salt, and wine to it (they) shall be to the back [to the inverse?]. This looks like the key to solving a riddle on the other side of the world!

Shakespeare:
We sent our schoolmaster; is 'a come **back**?
Love, I am full of lead. Some **wine**, [2, Ant.].

For sure, Shakespeare correlates on it but not until he writes *Hamlet* does he realize that the prophecies had named a specific drink that could have served as a vehicle for poison. Contrary to academic opinion, *Hamlet* or parts of it were likely written *after* and not before *Antony and Cleopatra*. And yes, it had to be poison in the wine that killed the son of the enraged woman!

From a chronological point of view, Bajazeth and Zabina in a Marlowe play [5, 1Tam] would be the first of the double suicides by unbridled love, each by brain bashing, not by poison. What about the drinks? Marlowe chooses "liquor" for Bajazeth and "milk" for Zabina. Amazingly, just like Shakespeare prior to *Hamlet*, Marlowe fails to notice the dots connecting the deaths by poison to the *wine* prophecy.

MACBETH

Nostradamus:
La chef de Londres par regne l'Americh,
L'isle d'Escosse tempiera par gellee:
Roy Reb auront vn si faux antechrist,
Que les mettra trestous dans la meslee [1, X-66].

The chief of London by reign of America, The isle of Scotland tempered by frost, Roy Reb (they) shall have one so false Antichrist, Who shall put them all into the melee.

In this one we return to London, Marlowe's favorite town, but it was Shakespeare who got to write about it. The *Americh* at the end of the first verse has to be *America* but the final letter was changed to achieve rhyme with *antechrist* at the end of the third verse. The meaning of "Roy Reb" is unknown. The edition of 1590 [1] puts a dot after the Reb (Reb.) suggesting an abbreviation (but dots were not commonly used for abbreviations in French). The accompanying verb clearly implies a plural subject, so perhaps we should recall the *two* "Roy" of the *griffin* prophecy.

Scotland in the second line gives us the setting of *Macbeth*. Note the *frost* at the end of that line in light of the following:

Shakespeare:
A woman's story at a **winter's** fire [2, Mac.].

Marlowe appears to be confused over the meaning of the *antechrist*:

Marlowe:
To wrack, an **antechristian** kingdome falles [5, MP].

Marlowe:
Wherewith thy **antichristian** churches blaze [5, E2].

In the first instance, *antechrist* means *existing before Christ* and in the second instance it means *fighting against Christ*. Shakespeare, however, is not confused: the Antichrist means blood and death, and combined with the melee, wild killing.

And wild killing is exactly what we get in *Macbeth*. At the end of the play, an English army (note the reference to England, via London, in the first line) arrives to finish the slaughter.

Curiously, Shakespeare seems to be unaware that the Virginia Colony was called America:

Shakespeare:
ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE. Where Spain?
DROMIO OF SYRACUSE. Faith, I saw it not, but I felt it hot in her breath.
ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE. Where **America**, the Indies? [2, Err.].

Could he have been hoping that someone in his audience would tell him where America was located?

One final comment: It is quite mysterious why Shakespeare would want to utilize this nonsensical prophecy. First of all, Nostradamus uses the word "chef" (chief) rather than "roy" (king) found everywhere else for England. Thus, the *chief of London* can only be the Mayor of London or perhaps the Prime Minister of the entire country (no such thing in Shakespeare's day), to whom, apparently, the Scots have a rather *cold* attitude. Moreover, it is absolutely ludicrous to think that the Americans would be able to drag him into the war of Marlowe's *Antechrist* or of his *Antichrist*.

CELESTIAL THEMES

In these illustrations, we turn our attention toward the heavens.

Nostradamus:

... **cieux** en **tesmoings**.
Que plusieurs **regnes vn à cinq** feront change [1, VI-2].

... heavens (or skies) in testimony, That many reigns one to five shall make change.

Shakespeare:

HERMIONE. There's **some** ill planet **reigns**.
I must be patient till the **heavens look** [2, WT].

Note that the English *reigns* was extracted from Nostradamus as a noun but in Shakespeare it got employed as a verb. Shakespeare is only looking at the English translation in isolation. The same applies for *one to five* (an end total of five) which equates with *some* in the sense of *a few* but is here used in the sense of *one or another*. Elsewhere, we find the sequential progression: "One to ten!" [2, 1H6].

In the next correlation, we travel to places rarely visited!

Nostradamus:

Par pluye longue le long du **polle arctique**:
Samarobryn cent **lieux** de l'**hemisphere**,
Viuront sans loy **exempt de** pollitique [1, VI-5].

By a long rain the length of the Arctic Pole, Samarobryn a hundred leagues from the hemisphere, Living without law, exempt from politics.

Marlowe:

We mean to travel to th' ant**arctic pole**,
...
When Phoebus, leaping from his **hemisphere** [5, 2Tam].

Wikipedia, in its article on Antarctica, notes that "Antarctica has no indigenous population and there is no evidence that it was seen by humans until the 19th century." Elsewhere, Marlowe clarifies that *from his hemisphere* means upward into the sky: "Leaps from th' antartic world unto the sky" [5, Fau.].

Shakespeare is cynical: "By the North Pole, I do challenge thee" which evokes the response "I will not fight with a pole, like a Northern man" [2, LLL].

The long rain along the length of the Arctic could allude to the essential element of an Ice Age or, alternatively, to radioactive fallout, which, from the days of nuclear testing in the atmosphere, is known to gravitate toward the Poles.

A hundred leagues would place Samarobryn roughly one hundred and fifty miles above the ground; thus, Marlowe and Shakespeare are in agreement that Samarobryn lives high in the sky. Moreover, Shakespeare envisions life in orbit at even greater distances:

Shakespeare:
Hang in the air a **thousand leagues** from hence [2, 1H4].

Hang (suspended) in the air assures us that the distance is upward into the sky, and Shakespeare then replaces the *hundred* of Nostradamus with a *thousand* to make it a double correlation. He has more to say:

Shakespeare:
Corrupted, and **exempt from** ancient gentry?
His trespass yet **lives** guilty in thy blood [2, 1H6].

Here the verb "lives," a variation of "living," seals the correlations. The question mark at the end of the first line suggests that Shakespeare may

have been confused over the meaning of *politique* and, indeed, the English words "politics" and "political" are nowhere to be found in the works of Shakespeare, nor in Marlowe for that matter. Curiously, the original "politique" [4] of Nostradamus inexplicably appears in the English-language dedicatory to a publication (1598) of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*.

For our part, we have no problem in surmising that Samarobryn was quite fortunate to get away from the political nonsense of the *ancient gentry* living on the ground below!

Let's now go farther out into space.

Nostradamus:
Venus cachée soubs la **blancheur**, **Neptune**,
De mars frappé par la **grauée** blanche [4, IV-33].

Venus hidden under the whiteness, Neptune, From Mars struck through the white gravel. Variants: no comma (,) before Neptune, Mars, frappée, granée, branche [1].

Shakespeare confesses that he is *confused* by the high (in the sky) gravel:

Shakespeare:
LAUNCELOT. [Aside] O **heavens**! This is my true-begotten father, who, being more than sand-blind, high-**gravel** blind, knows me not. I will try confusions with him [2, MV].

By twice using the word *blind* (beginning with "*bl*") both before and immediately following the gravel, Shakespeare seems to think that the textual variant "blanche" (and not the more frequently seen "branche") is the correct word for the French text of the prophecy. As for the meaning of the white gravel, one possibility would be the tail of a comet. Indeed, Nostradamus alludes to the forthcoming appearance of Halley's Comet in

1607 when he refers to an increase in "astronomes" for the year *mil six cens & sept* [1, VIII-71].

Elsewhere, Shakespeare again views the gravel as grains of sand:

Shakespeare:
And sat with me on **Neptune**'s **yellow sands** [2, AMD].

Note that *yellow* is also marked in bold since it is merely a change of color (from the white of Nostradamus). And once again Shakespeare seems to think that "blanche" and not "branche" is the correct word. How was he so sure about that?

Nostradamus:
Quand le **Soleil** prendra ses iours lassez,
Lors accomplir & mine ma prophetie [1, I-48].

When the Sun shall take its (or his) tired days, Then to accomplish and terminate my prophecy. Variant: accomplit [4]. Here Nostradamus is referring to the termination of all his prophecies as a collection (in other words, this would be the last prophecy), similar to how Marlowe used "a Prophesy" [6] to refer to a book of individual oracles still in the process of fulfillment.

At the end of the first line, the first complete edition (1590) changed the "lassez" of the partial editions of 1588 and 1589 to "lassés," but this was changed back to "lassez" in both of our definitive editions. Thus, the "lassés," a word meaning *tired*, has to be incorrect. It makes us think of an effort to frenchify (mainly an alteration of the vowels) the Latin "lessus," which, in the genitive case, would give us *days of wailing* or simply *days of tears*. Shakespeare may have envisioned teardrops on the surface of the Sun: "Suns of the world may stain, when heaven's sun staineth" [2, Son.].

Sunspots? Yes, Shakespeare is probably referring to sunspots. They were discovered by astronomers, including Galileo, between 1610 and 1612, but Shakespeare published his sunspot observations in 1609!

Shakespeare:
Disasters in the **sun**; and the **moist star**
Upon whose influence **Neptune**'s empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with **eclipse** [2, Ham.].

Are we to believe that Shakespeare, already centuries ahead of our scientists with regard to life in orbit, beats them again in predicting that the end of our solar system (*doomsday*) will result from the expansion and collapse of our Sun (*Disasters in the sun*)?

Venus is described as the *moist star*. Marlowe uses the words "night-wandering, pale, and wat'ry star" [5, HL]. Surely, Marlowe's Venus is *pale* because she is *sick with eclipse* but later she comes out of the shadows to become Shakespeare's "bright star of Venus" [2, 1H6]. Note also that, in both cases, the concept of *wetness* is based on association with Neptune, named after the Roman god of the *sea*.

Above, we saw that Venus is hidden (*cachée*) under the whiteness, implying an *eclipse* of celestial entities. Though Shakespeare, for reasons unknown, seems to have failed to recognize Kappa, Theta, Lambda as a triangle of sting stars, he likely concluded, or suspected, that *Neptune* (seen by Galileo but not officially named until 1846!) had to be something in the heavens. Marlowe, of course, concurs with this point of view:

Marlowe:
FAUSTUS. How many heavens or spheres are there?
MEPHIST. Nine; ... [5, Fau.].

Faustus refers to *eclipses* in a follow-up question. At hand, leaping from seven (the classical spheres of Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn) to nine requires the addition of *both* Earth (post Copernicus) and Neptune. Confirmation comes from elsewhere:

Nostradamus:
D'humain troupeau neuf seront mis à part,
De iugement & conseil separez [1, I-81].

Of human flock, nine shall be placed apart, Of judgment and counsel separated.

Shakespeare wrote about the "Nine Worthies" [2, LLL] and also about the "nine sibyls" [2, 1H6], but Marlowe intelligently noticed that the *devoid of judgment and counsel* could indicate that these were nine *inanimate* objects, inferring nine planets in the solar system of us humans. In all fairness to Shakespeare, however, we must admit that in the end he finally figured it out, giving us "nine moons" [2, Oth.] which comes close enough.

And did we forget to mention an early vignette [4] that displays Nostradamus observing nine celestial bodies? Could the "choses celestes visibles" [1] (from the prose introduction) have made it easy to imagine the existence of celestial things that were *not* visible? Curiously, on April 15, 1781, a little more than a month after the discovery of the planet Uranus, the Papal Court issued a Bull threatening excommunication and the galleys to anyone who dared to read the prophecies of Nostradamus! Perhaps Shakespeare knew what he was doing when, as we saw, he went out of his way to avoid offending the Papacy!

A BRIEF NOTE ON CORRELATIONS

Let's start with another look at how the prophecies and our English playwrights make symbolic use of Greek mythology:

Nostradamus:
Comm'vn **Gryphon** viendra le Roy d'Europe
Accompagné de ceux **d'aquilon** [4, X-86].

Like a griffin shall come the king of Europe, Accompanied by those of the North [NATO?]. Variants: Comme vn gryphon, de l'Aquilon [1].

Aquilon, like Boreas seen earlier, was a classical name of the North Wind and as such could represent anything northern. Nostradamus also uses it as an adjective in relation to the conquest of the northern part of an Oriental country (the "Ceulx d'Orient" prophecy): ***Subiugant*** *presque le coing* ***Aquilonaire*** [1, I-49].

Shakespeare:
The Queen **with** all the **northern** earls and lords
Intend here to **besiege** you in your castle.[2, 3H6.].

The griffin was a mythical animal with the head of an eagle and the body of a lion. Needless to say, the American eagle and the British lion could never combine to exert influence over Europe!

Marlowe:
(Auster and **Aquilon** with **winged steeds**, [5, 1Tam].

The griffin is often depicted with wings. However, Shakespeare notices that this is particular griffin is *kingly*, so he removes the wings: "A clip-wing'd griffin" [2, 1H4].

Shakespeare:
Out-swell the colic of puff **Aquilon**'**d** [2, Tro.].

This is actually a two-word correlation as Shakespeare reverses the *d'* of Nostradamus and puts it at the end.

While *Aquilon* and the *griffin* were easy enough to spot in the works of Marlowe and Shakespeare, some of the parallelism is much more difficult to recognize and that is the point we are trying to make here: computer searches cannot find all of the correlations.

Marlowe:
Such Ariadne was, when she bewails,
Her perjured Theseus' flying vows and sails. [5, Ovi.].

Shakespeare:
Madam, 'twas Ariadne passioning
For Theseus' perjury and unjust flight. [2, TGV].

Nostradamus, however, does not mention Ariadne or Theseus anywhere in his text, but look at the following:

Nostradamus:
Chassez bannis & liures censurez,
L'an mil six cens & sept par sacre glomes. [1, VIII-71].

Chased out, banished, and books censured, The year thousand six hundred & seven by sacred ball of thread.

Key to solving this is the word "glomes," a frenchifying of the Latin *glomus* which refers to a ball of thread. In Greek mythology, Ariadne gave a *ball of thread* to Theseus so that he could find his way out of the Labyrinth of Crete. Meanwhile, the citations refer to *fleeing* and *flight* which connect with *Chased out, banished* and seal the correlations.

One further word of advice for researchers wishing to expand on this investigation (there are an unknown number of correlations remaining to be found): Rely as much as possible on the original text of the First Folio or the Second Folio. Recall the *I cannot tell wat is buisse in Anglish* where the Project Gutenberg changed *buisse* to *baiser* because it made more sense, inadvertently damaging chances to find a correlation. Even worse, in the Third Folio, *Anglish* was changed to *English* (as if Shakespeare did not know how to spell that word!), severely upsetting the correlation with *Anglicque*.

THE INCANTATION

Beyond the prophecies on which Marlowe and Shakespeare correlate, the Nostradamus text contains one unnumbered incantation written entirely in Latin. Unlike the prophecies, it has a title: Legis cantio contra ineptos criticos, *Incantation of the Law Against Inept Critics*.

Nostradamus:
Quos legent hosce versus **maturè** censunto,
Profanum vulgus, & inscium ne attrectato,
Omnesq; Astrologi **Blenni**, **Barbari procul sunto**,
Qui aliter facit, is ritè, sacer esto [1].

Let those who read these verses, consider them maturely, May the profane, the vulgar, and the ignorant be not attracted, That all Astrologers, Retards, Barbarians stay far away, He who does otherwise, be he sacred by rite.

Shakespeare:
EVANS. It is **qui**, quae, quod; if you forget your qui's, your quae's, and your **quod's**, you must be **preeches**. Go your ways and play; **go** [2, Wiv.].

Scholars believe "preeches" is a misprint for *breeched*, from where we would surmise *you must be spanked*. By misspelling "b" as "p," Shakespeare

draws attention to a word beginning with the letter "b": *Blenni* refers to stupid people and fits perfectly well with forgetting your quod's.

Shakespeare:
But stay, I'll **read** it **over once again**.
QUEEN. Ah, **barbarous** villains! … [2, 2H6].

To read it *over once again* equates with to read it *maturely*, and elsewhere Shakespeare gives us yet another "Read it again" [2, AWW]. Indeed, to understand the mind of Shakespeare, and how he arrives at some of the strange things that he says, it could be helpful to go back and read our illustrations *once again*.

As for the *barbarous*, note that *Barbari* alludes to people who would be unfamiliar with the Latin language, of which French is a derivative. And it certainly looks like Shakespeare took extreme measures to evade barbarian status: beyond a sprinkling of Latinates everywhere, his Henry the Fifth play includes French dialogue! Indeed, one can only wonder if "criticos" from the title line of the *Incantation* inspired his creation of the English word "critical," and so forth.

Finally, please note that Shakespeare fears (perhaps literally) not adhering to the *Incantation's* condemnation of astrologers: he writes a bunch of history plays for epochs when kings and queens would often adhere to the guidance of their personal astrologer, but nowhere in his massive canon (laden with witches, soothsayers and the like) do we find the words "astrology" or "astrologer"!

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. LES PROPHETIES DE M. MICHEL NOSTRADAMVS. Dont il y en a trois cens qui n'ont encores iamais esté imprimées. Adiouftées de nouueau par ledict Autheur. A LYON, PAR BENOIST RIGAVD, 1568.

Several printings of this edition (a revision of the Rousseau edition of 1590) are still extant. The specific printing cited for our illustrations was labeled Chomarat 96 by bibliographers, and a facsimile of it is available for free download in PDF format from the website propheties.it. Roman numerals from I to X were used to number ten groups of one hundred prophecies, and within each group Arabic numerals from 1 to 100 were used to number each individual prophecy.

2. The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, by William Shakespeare:

Ado, Much Ado About Nothing; Ant., The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra; AWW, Alls Well that Ends Well; AYL, As You Like It; Cor., The Tragedy of Coriolanus; Cym., Cymbeline; Err., The Comedy of Errors; Ham., The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark; 1H4, The First Part of King Henry the Fourth; 2H4, Second Part of King Henry IV; H5, The Life of King Henry the Fifth; 1H6, The First Part of King Henry the Sixth; 2H6, The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth; 3H6, The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth; H8, King Henry the Eighth; JC, The Tragedy of Julius Caesar; Jn., King John; LLL, Love's Labour's Lost; Lr., The Tragedy of King Lear; Mac., The Tragedy of Macbeth; MM, Measure for Measure; MND, A Midsummer Night's Dream; MV, The Merchant of Venice; Oth., The Tragedy of Othello, Moor of Venice; R2, King Richard the Second; R3, King Richard the Third; Rom., The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet; Shr., The Taming of the Shrew; Son., The Sonnets; TGV, The Two Gentlemen from Verona; Tim., The Life of Timon of Athens; Tit., The Tragedy of Titus Andronicus; Tmp., The Tempest; TN, Twelfth Night, Or,

What You Will; Tro., The History of Troilus and Cressida; Ven., Venus and Adonis; Wiv., The Merry Wives of Windsor; WT, The Winter's Tale.

Correlations with Nostradamus permeate all thirty-six plays of the First Folio, his first poem, and his Sonnets.

3. THE TRUE PROPHECIES OR PROGNOSTICATIONS OF Michael Nostradamus, PHYSICIAN TO Henry II. Francis II. and Charles IX. KINGS of FRANCE ... Translated and Commented by THEOPHILUS de GARENCIERES, Doctor in Physick ... LONDON, Printed by Thomas Ratcliffe, and Nathaniel Thompson, ... 1672.

A facsimile cam be viewed online at Google Books and citations can be found via Google search. This book follows the Nostradamus numbering system.

4. LES PROPHETIES DE Me. MICHEL. NOSTRADAMVS. Dont il y en a trois cens qui n'ont encores iamais esté imprimees. Adioutees de nouueau par ledict Autheur. A LYON, PAR IEAN HVGVETAN M.DC.XXVII.

Technical analysis reveals that this edition (which may be a copy of an earlier edition that is now lost) was very likely the printing of a backup manuscript and thus it has considerable value despite the late publication date. A facsimile is available for free download in PDF format from the website propheties.it.

5. The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Works of Christopher Marlowe, Individual Plays by Christopher Marlowe:

1Tam, Tamburlaine the Great, Part I; 2Tam, Tamburlaine the Great, Part II; Did., The Tragedy of Dido Queene of Carthage; E2, Edward II; Fau., The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus; HL, Hero and Leander; JM, The Jew of Malta; Luc., First Book of Lucan; MP, Massacre at Paris; Ovi., Ovid's Elegies.

These works are a free download. Note that Marlowe, having died young, wrote far less than Shakespeare, thus the heavy correlations with Nostradamus are

especially significant. Those correlations permeate all of his plays, his major poem, and his manipulated translations.

6. Project Gutenberg Etext of The Reign of King Edward the Third, attributed in part to William Shakespeare.

Wikipedia, in its article on this play, notes that Act III, Scenes i and ii, from where our citations come, were attributed to Marlowe by Hartmut Ilsemann (2014).

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More information on the themes of this essay is available on the sub-pages of that website.

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